

**U.S. official sees special Gulf tax**

**BOCA RATON**, Florida (R) — The head of the U.S. Senate Budget Committee called Saturday for President George Bush to impose a special tax to finance war in the Gulf if fighting breaks out. "If the situation deteriorates, if we get into a full-blown war in the Middle East, I think it is going to be incumbent on the president perhaps to propose some type of surtax or some other type of measure to pay for the war," said the budget committee chairman, James Sasser, a Democrat. "We simply cannot continue to borrow to finance a war to protect the oil supply for our friends in Japan and Western Europe," Sasser told reporters after addressing the Securities Industry Association (SIA) convention. The tax might take the form of a temporary income surcharge, such as the 10 percent levy imposed in 1969 to finance the Vietnam war, Sasser said. Sasser noted U.S. allies have failed to provide substantial financing for the military presence in Saudi Arabia.

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**Syria ready to deploy more troops**

**ABU DHABI** (AP) — Syrian Defence Minister Mustafa Tlas says Damascus is ready to send more troops to the Gulf to help confront Iraq, the state-owned Al Ittihad daily reported Saturday. "Our forces in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) are to defend these two countries and we are ready to increase their number to half a million if requested" by King Fahd of Saudi Arabia and Sheikh Zayed, president of the UAE, he said. Syria's armed forces total some 400,000 men, with about the same number of reserves. But the flamboyant Tlas' mention of deploying as many as 500,000 men was seen as a means of emphasising Syria's commitment to the U.S.-led multinational force in the Gulf rather than a pledge to send virtually half of Syria's military manpower to the region. Syria is a bitter rival of Iraq. But it has some 40,000 troops in Lebanon and several divisions on Iraq's northern border. It is also unlikely to strip its defenses against Israel to bolster a force that by mid-January will total in excess of 550,000 personnel.

**50th American casualty in S. Arabia**

**SAUDI ARABIA** (AP) — An airman with the U.S. air force 4th tactical fighter wing's civil engineering squadron was killed Saturday in a vehicle accident, military officials said. The accident occurred at 5:40 a.m. at an air base in Saudi Arabia, and the air force is investigating. He was the 50th U.S. serviceman to die since the deployment began. Of those, two were from natural causes and one was a suicide.

**Sudan to use conscripts against rebels**

**KHARTOUM** (R) — All Sudanese aged between 16 and 70 are to be conscripted into a militia fighting southern rebels, an official newspaper said Saturday. Al Hadeth newspaper quoted Brigadier Babiker Abdul Mahmoud, commander of the Popular Defence Forces, as saying the call-up would take place over five years. It gave no other details. The militia was formed a year ago to help the regular army fight the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), which has been battling since 1983 for more autonomy for southern regions.

**Bush 'trial' in Algiers called off**

**ALGIERS** (R) — Lawyers organising a mock trial of U.S. President George Bush over the Gulf crisis cancelled the event Saturday after criticism from the Algerian government. Ali Ammar Laouar, president of a preparatory committee, said the government had in effect banned the event by denouncing it on Friday as interference in the country's foreign policy.

**Seven Iraqis executed in Kuwait**

**NICOSIA** (AP) — Iraqi authorities have hanged seven Iraqis in Kuwait for burglary and other crimes, Baghdad's Al Joumhouria daily reported Saturday. Six of the men had been convicted by a civilian criminal court of stealing from several premises in Kuwait City, the newspaper said. The seventh, a goldsmith, was convicted of buying a "large quantity of jewellery" from the thieves, the daily said. It reported that the victims of the burglaries witnessed the executions.

**Somali minister arrives in Cairo**

**CAIRO** (AP) — Somali Foreign Minister Ahmad Mohammad Aden arrived Saturday in Cairo where he will meet his Egyptian counterpart Esmat Abdul Meguid to discuss peace talks on Somalia to be held here later this month. The government-run Middle East News Agency (MENA) said Aden's visit to Egypt came in response to Abdul Meguid's invitation. It said he will stay here a few days but did not specify when the two ministers will meet. Cairo will host Somali government and rebel representatives on Dec. 11 and 12 in talks aimed at ending the insurgency and violence in that country. Italy, Somalia's former colonial ruler, will also attend the peace talks. But the Somali National Movement said neither it nor two other major rebel groups planned to attend what it described as a "bogus meeting."

**Mozambique, rebels reach partial truce**

**ROME** (AP) — The Mozambique government and the Renamo rebel group Saturday reached a partial ceasefire agreement which will be monitored by eight countries, including the United States and the Soviet Union. The accord, signed in Rome after a mediation effort by Italy and a Roman Catholic charity organisation, would lead to the prompting of an estimated 30,000 Zimbabwean troops, who are assisting the Mozambique government, into two corridors in the Beira and Limpopo River area. The agreement provided for the eight-nation monitoring committee, Mozambique, the Renamo group and Italy to meet around mid-December in Rome to coordinate efforts to end the 15-year-old civil war.

## Iraq accepts U.S. call for talks, says Palestine issue should be included

Combined agency dispatches

mid-December.

Bush declared he was ready "to go the extra mile for peace." (see page 4)

The Revolutionary Command Council announced its acceptance in a statement harshly critical of Bush, whom it described as "the enemy of God." It said it wanted serious dialogue guided by Iraq's Aug. 12 initiative.

Baghdad said then the Gulf crisis must be solved in tandem with other Middle East issues, especially the Arab-Israeli conflict. It made no mention of withdrawing from Kuwait.

Western leaders refuse to link the issues but say a resolution of the Gulf crisis could clear the way for a Palestinian settlement.

Bush made his offer hours after the U.N. Security Council voted by 12 votes to two, with China abstaining, to authorize force to drive Iraq out of Kuwait if it refused to withdraw by January 15.

Bush insisted Baker's visit would be aimed only at spelling out the consequences of refusing to comply with the U.N. resolution and would not be "a trip of concession."

But he disclosed that Iraq had on Friday started resupplying the besieged U.S. embassy in Kuwait. "Let's try to be optimistic. This could be a positive sign," he said.

On Saturday, the Bush administration was weighing its next step in light of Baghdad's decision to accept the invitation.

The Iraqi statement said exact dates and arrangements for the visits of Baker to Baghdad and Aziz to Washington would be agreed when an official invitation reached Baghdad.

Interviewed on a U.S. television

programme, Vice-President Dan Quayle made it clear that the U.S. position had not changed, saying on Saturday, "there is no

House of Representatives

Democratic leader Richard Gephardt, who previously had sniped at Bush's apparent openness to the use of force in the Gulf, Friday called the offer sound and said Iraq should learn from it that Americans were "united in our determination to see him end his occupation of Kuwait forthwith."

"I welcome the president's peace initiative," said Senator Edward Kennedy, a Democrat on the Armed Services Committee which last week held hearings that fielded a succession of witnesses critical of Bush's Gulf policy.

The exact timing for any visits have not yet been completed. Bush said he hoped Saddam would meet Baker "at a mutually convenient time" between Dec. 15 and Jan. 15. He invited Aziz to Washington for consultations during the week of Dec. 10.

Kissinger sees 'error'

Former U.S. Secretary of State Henry Kissinger said in a television interview he believed Bush's decision to send Baker to Iraq could jeopardise an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait.

"I have not been so worried in decades as I am tonight," said Kissinger, who served as secretary of state under Presidents

(Continued on page 5)

## Bush offer to Iraq draws wide international support

Combined agency dispatches

offer by Bush to meet with Iraqi officials, but stressed that they are ready for war.

"It's either heads or tails. Either withdraw completely or be kicked out of Kuwait," said Mohammad Khayat, an official with the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Information.

Hassan Abdul Aziz, a professor at Kuwait University and a volunteer in the Kuwaiti information office in Saudi Arabia, said he doubted whether diplomacy would work.

Egypt's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Boutros Ghali said that Egypt welcomed the offer as it gave priority to a peaceful settlement.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) welcomed the Bush offer and said it could be a turning point in the history of the Middle East.

The U.S. president's decision is a step in the right direction," PLO spokesman Yasser Abed Rabbo said in Tunis.

"We hope the agenda for dialogue will include all regional issues, including rapid holding of an international

peace conference and international protection for our people under (Arab) occupation," he said.

In Khartoum, a government spokesman said Sudanese military ruler Omar Al Bashir welcomed Bush's call for negotiations as a step in the right direction.

Al Sadiq Bakheit, Bashir's press advisor, told a news conference:

"We hope that wisdom will reign and that all will come back to reason as the new U.S. initiative, if it is genuine, constitutes a return to consciousness of the terrible hazards of a war between Iraq and the foreign troops amassed in the Middle East."

In London, the Foreign Office issued a statement saying it welcomed "anything that would secure full implementation of the Security Council resolutions" that call for Iraq to vacate Kuwait.

Qasem was commenting on Bush's announcement Friday that he will dispatch Secretary of State James Baker to Baghdad to discuss an end to Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait.

Bush also invited Iraqi Foreign

(Continued on page 2)

## Chad government said to have fled

Paris (Agencies)

France ordered its 1,250 civilian nationals in Chad to prepare to evacuate amid unconfirmed reports Saturday that the government had fled the capital ahead of a rebel advance.

The Libyan news agency JANA said President Hissene Habre left N'djamena Friday night and rebels entered the city on Saturday.

But Chad's ambassador to Cairo said Habre had left N'djamena with loyal forces but Adam said it would take the rebels several days to reach the capital.

French television reported Saturday that senior members of Habre's government had left N'djamena probably to take his 12,000-man army to his home base in the remote Tibesti mountains.

Habre's men are desert combatants, not city fighters. They took N'djamena in 1982 without fighting," one expert said, referring to Habre's defeat of former President Gnoumou Oueddei.

There are more than 1,000 French troops in N'djamena and neighbouring Cameroon.

liberate Abeche.

He said communications with his government in the capital had been cut off and he had no further details of Habre's counter-offensive.

Rebels, led by renegade General Idriess Deby, seized Abeche without resistance and Friday were reported by Western diplomats to be advancing on the capital.

The French government has advised its 1,250 nationals in Chad to prepare for evacuation because of the rebel advance but Adam said it would take the rebels several days to reach the capital.

French experts familiar with Chad's decades of civil war said they had expected Habre to flee N'djamena probably to take his 12,000-man army to his home base in the remote Tibesti mountains.

Habre's men are desert combatants, not city fighters. They took N'djamena in 1982 without fighting," one expert said, referring to Habre's defeat of former President Gnoumou Oueddei.

There are more than 1,000 French troops in N'djamena and neighbouring Cameroon.

French officials said two French aircraft were going to N'djamena to be ready to fly home French citizens, who had been asked to assemble.

President Francois Mitterrand's Africa experts have decided that France should not intervene this time, on the grounds that Libya is not involved.

The chief spokesman on African affairs, Cooperation Minister Jacques Pelletier, said on television: "I don't think one can say that we have abandoned Habre too quickly. Our policy is not to intervene in internal conflicts."

France would act only if its nationals were threatened or if Chad faced foreign attack, he said. Paris believed the current fighting was "not a foreign invasion."

Libya has denied Chadian and U.S. charges that Deby, who launched his rebel offensive from neighbouring Sudan three weeks ago, is armed and aided by Libya.

In the past, Washington has provided Habre with planes, trucks and ammunition, but those supplies appeared to have dried up, diplomats said.

A PSF spokesman, reached by

## Crown Prince extends cautious welcome to U.S. move to open contacts with Iraq

AMMAN (J.T.) — The American move to establish direct contact with Iraq over the Gulf crisis is a welcome development as long as its ultimate goal is to address the basic roots of the conflict and regional peace and not a tactic to gain time, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan said Saturday.

In two television interviews, the Crown Prince also underlined the need for urgent political and diplomatic action to address the Palestinian problem, particularly in light of recent statements by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir that Israel would keep the occupied Arab territories for Jewish immigrants.

"The bitterness today, particularly the polarisation of religious extremes which seem to be almost taking over from a conflict

of sovereign, is very, very wor-

rying," the Crown Prince said in an interview with Britain's World Television News (WTN). "Unless

political and diplomatic action is taken soon, it will be very difficult to retrace the original thread of argument, particularly with the changes taking place in the occupied territories so swiftly and of course the question of further migration into the occupied territories which Mr. Shamir touched on in his last remarks," he said.

The Crown Prince voiced hope that the latest American initiative, proposed by President George Bush Friday, would offer the opportunity for both the U.S. and Iraq to move towards resolving the Gulf crisis without losing face.

In the same time, he also expressed hope that the American move was not a tactic aimed at gaining time for U.S. troops to complete their deployment in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere in the Gulf region as a whole."

In his comments to WTN on the same subject, the Crown Prince said the American move, in principle, represented what Jordan had always called for.

While he said he did not know whether Jordan had any direct or indirect role in producing such an initiative, "certainly indirectly it is an indication of everything that

initiating discussions with the Iraqi foreign minister and correspondingly a visit by the secretary of state to Baghdad and again moved 300 aircraft, and 200,000

troops would be in position by the end of January," he pointed out.

"Let us hope that this is not a tactic; that it is really a strategic investment in peace not only between Iraq and Kuwait but also in the Gulf region as a whole."

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(Continued on page 5)

## Israeli soldiers kill Palestinian woman

OCC

## U.S. unlikely to block mild resolution to protect Palestinians

**UNITED NATIONS (AP)** — The United States, having won Security Council sanction for the use of force against Iraq, indicated Friday that it would not veto a moderate resolution on protection of Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied territories.

The Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) meanwhile, complained that the U.S. government had stalled in granting a visa to the PLO's foreign minister, Farouk Qaddoumi, to attend the annual General Assembly debate on Palestinians.

The United States, which has no diplomatic relations with the PLO, granted the visa Wednesday night and Qaddoumi was expected to visit New York next week on U.N. business and was likely to address the assembly.

Western diplomats, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the United States had let the PLO and its allies know that if they didn't inject the Palestine issue into debate on Thursday, the U.S. government would seriously consider a moderate resolution on Palestinians and might abstain, allowing it to pass.

On Thursday, at U.S. urging, the council authorised the United States and its allies in the Gulf to use military force to expel Iraq from Kuwait if it does not withdraw by Jan. 15.

The United States, president of the council for the month of November, had not wanted the

Palestinian issue to interfere with its push for approval of the use-of-force resolution on Thursday.

A negative vote or an abstention from the United States on a tough resolution calling for U.N. observers to protect Palestinians in the occupied territories could offend the Arab members of the council against Iraq.

The United States succeeded in putting off the Palestinian issue until Yemen takes over the presidency of the council in December. The question of protecting Palestinians is expected to be taken up next week.

The PLO, Yemen, Cuba, Colombia and Malaysia had complained bitterly that the United States had blocked consideration of their original resolution, which had been presented to the council more than three weeks ago.

That resolution, which was certain to provoke a U.S. veto, called for deployment of U.N. observers in the Israeli-occupied territories to safeguard Palestinians from human rights abuses. It also called for a meeting of the 164 high contracting parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to ensure that Israel protects civilians in the occupied territories.

Israel has rejected such a resolution and said it expects a veto from its U.S. ally.

But this week Finland presented a milder counter-resolution, calling for a U.N.

ombudsman, with U.N. support staff, to look into the Palestinian situation, it also welcomed convening a conference to ensure protection of Palestinian rights.

Israel rejects that formulation as well. But Israeli sources indicated the Finnish proposal was not as offensive as the original resolution.

Meanwhile, the General Assembly continued discussion Friday of the Palestinian situation. Most speakers called for Israel's withdrawal from the territories it has occupied since the 1967 war and for an international Mideast peace conference.

Israeli Ambassador Yoram Aridor, in a speech to the assembly Friday, repeated Israel's position that it was ready to make peace with its neighbours on a bilateral basis, as it had done with Egypt.

Aridor also complained that the United Nations, which now condemns Iraq for overrunning Kuwait, "in 1948 did nothing to stop the combined onslaught of seven of its Arab member-states who pounced upon Israel in order to destroy the new Jewish state."

Israel's right to exist, he said, had been recognised in the mandate of the League of Nations and the U.N. General Assembly.

"Israel, the only democracy in the Middle East, gets special, separate and unequal treatment from this assembly on a consistent basis," he said.

## Ali delays departure from Iraq

**BAGHDAD (Agencies)** — American boxing great Muhammad Ali postponed a planned departure from Baghdad with 15 compatriots Saturday and aides said he was negotiating to have three more released.

The aides said Ali made the move after Friday night's surprise offer by U.S. President George Bush to send Secretary of State James Baker to Baghdad for talks on the Gulf crisis.

The aides gave no other details. Ali and his group had been scheduled to fly to Amman aboard an Iraqi Airways flight.

The aides said Ali's group will seek meetings with senior Iraqi officials and may leave Baghdad Sunday or Monday, depending on the outcome of those meetings.

Ali's manager and spokesman, Jaber Mohammad, said Friday that the 15 Americans had all been held at strategic sites in Iraq.

Ali, a former world heavyweight boxing champion, has been in Baghdad more than a week with two aides and members of the Coalition to Stop U.S. Intervention in the Middle East.

On his self-described mission to win the release of foreign nationals and seeks a peaceful solution to the crisis, Ali met with President Saddam Hussein this week.

Two Norwegians held in Iraq will leave the country Sunday while a third Norwegian aims to go home next day, the Oslo Foreign Ministry said.

Iraqi authorities earlier this week promised that four Norwegians would be permitted to leave Iraq immediately while another five would be allowed to go home before Christmas.

"Two will leave Iraq on Sunday and travel via Moscow. They will be in Oslo on Tuesday morning," Foreign Ministry spokesman Bjorn Blokhus said.

A group of Japanese led by a

former professional wrestler arrived in Baghdad Saturday hoping to win freedom for up to 30 Japanese.

Japanese diplomatic sources said Upper House Member Antonio Inoki, a retired wrestler, was accompanied by 25 relatives of Japanese held in Iraq.

There are 239 Japanese unable to leave Iraq and 119 of them are being held at key installations.

Saddam has offered to free the 2,000 Western and Japanese over a three-month period starting from Christmas day as a gesture of goodwill.

The Japanese sources said Socialist Party leader Takako Doi was expected to arrive in Baghdad on Dec. 10 at the invitation of First Deputy Prime Minister Taha Yassin Ramadan. She was expected to appeal for the release of more Japanese.

They said former Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone was due to return to Baghdad Dec. 15. Nakasone was in the Iraqi capital last month, when he managed to secure the release of scores of Japanese.

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# Home News



Prince Ra'd Ben Zaid  
**Carl XVI**  
honours  
Prince  
Ra'd

STOCKHOLM (J.T.) — Their Highnesses Prince Ra'd Ben Zaid and Princess Majda Ra'd were honoured by Sweden's King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia at a state banquet at the royal palace in Stockholm Thursday.

Prince Ra'd and Princess Majda were also received by Sten Andersson, Swedish minister for foreign affairs, and offered a luncheon at the ministry for foreign affairs.

During their visit to the Swedish capital, Their Highnesses were invited to stay at Drottningholm Palace, the residence of Their Majesties King Carl XVI Gustaf and Queen Silvia.

## UNESCO to hold talks on population education and development

AMMAN (J.T.) — The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) is holding a regional consultative meeting on population education and development in the Arab states on Monday with the participation of specialists from various Arab countries.

A UNESCO statement said that the four-day meeting, to be held at the Amman Philadelphia Hotel, would review working papers dealing with population programmes in the Arab World based on statistics and data provided by 15 Arab countries, a summary of projects being implemented in the Arab region in cooperation with the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) and an assessment of issues common to the Arab World and related to population education and population communication.

The meeting, which will be opened by Minister of Education and Higher Education Mohammad Hamdan, is expected to be attended by 40 participants, all directors of population education departments or responsible officials in Arab ministries of education, university professors, deans of colleges and others concerned with population education in Syria, Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt, Yemen, Sudan, Lebanon, Bahrain and Jordan.

According to the UNESCO office here, the participants will discuss issues pertaining to population education in the Arab World, the concept of population education and its incorporation within the school curricula of the Arab World, challenges facing the population situation and solutions, proposals for promoting cooperation between Arab states, the UNFPA and UNESCO in dealing with such problems.

It said that the meeting would also prepare an Arab World declaration on population activities which would be submitted to an international conference on population education and development to be organised by UNESCO and UNFPA in Paris during 1992.

## WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

### EXHIBITIONS

\* Exhibition of 39 paintings by Iraqi artist Halimah Muhammad Ali at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation Gallery (10 a.m. - 5 p.m.)

\* Exhibition of British archaeological projects in Jordan at the Royal Cultural Centre.

## Jordan urges implementation of U.N. resolutions on Palestine

NEW YORK (Petra) — Jordan has urged the United Nations to implement Security Council resolutions on Palestine, issued since the Arab-Israeli war of 1967, and said that implementation of these resolutions could be carried out through an international peace conference in which all concerned parties can take part.

"International legitimacy can not be selective and is by no means divisible, and the U.N. Security Council possesses the machinery for implementing its own resolutions so as to bring peace to the Middle East," urged Jordan's Ambassador to the United Nations Abdulla Salah.

"The Security Council has so

far failed to implement its own resolutions due to Israel's rejection of these resolutions on the one hand and to the negative stand on the part of one of its five member nations on the other," Salah told the U.N. General Assembly meeting Friday evening.

He said that the most recent instance was represented by the Israeli massacre of 20 Arabs in Jerusalem which prompted the council to issue a resolution condemning the barbaric act and to decide to send an inquiry mission to investigate, but "the resolution was not implemented for the aforementioned reasons."

"The Palestine question is not a question of human rights and

refugees alone, but rather it is a political issue of the first degree and its essential component is the national and legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination in an independent state in Palestine," Salah pointed out.

Israel, he said, has been denying the Palestinians their basic rights which were endorsed by the world community through the Security Council, and the Palestinians have risen in an uprising to try to gain their freedom and their basic rights.

"The uprising, which is now entering its fourth year, is not a mere expression of despair and frustration, but rather the birth of



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Saturday receives Romanian and Jordanian delegation to trade talks (Petra photo)

Prince Hassan receives delegation

## Romania to import 65,000 tonnes of phosphate by year's end

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan

met at the royal court Saturday with the Romanian side to the Jordanian-Romanian joint economic committee led by Dumitru Popescu and called for further development of Jordanian-Romanian cooperation in political and economic fields.

The Crown Prince briefed the Romanian delegation on Jordan's position vis-a-vis the Gulf crisis

and its ongoing efforts to solve the issue by peaceful means and in accordance with the international legitimacy.

Developments in the Gulf, the Prince said, led to a sharp rise in oil prices that brought about disastrous consequences to poor nations and made the rich richer.

Referring to U.S. President George Bush's initiative for a dialogue with Iraq, the Crown Prince said that Jordan welcomes this development as a good chance for the attainment of peace.

U.N. Security Council Resolution 660 does not demand only that Iraq withdraw from Kuwait but also called for immediate negotiations between Kuwait and Iraq, the Crown Prince noted.

He said that the United Nations has not yet implemented Security Council resolutions concerning other issues, and it is hoped that all the region's issues will be settled one after the other.

Popescu conveyed to the Prince Romania's appreciation of Jordan's recognition of the new Romanian government and said that his country supports Jordan's views for finding a peaceful settlement for issues of the Middle East whose security is linked with that of Europe.

Earlier in the day the Romanian-Jordanian joint economic committee wound up a week-long session of talks and signed minutes of their deliberations giving details about agreements for expanding bilateral

cooperation in trade and economic fields.

A statement at the conclusion of the talks said that Romania will import 65,000 tonnes of Jordanian phosphate from now until the end of 1990 in implementation of a deal signed in October 1990 between the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company (JPMC) and the Romanian importing company.

According to that deal, Romania will import 200,000 tonnes of phosphate from now until the end of February 1991 and 400,000 tonnes during 1991.

The two sides agreed to create trade centres in Bucharest and Amman to sell national products directly to the public, according to the statement issued at the Ministry of Planning.

In order to organise the exchange of trade and to increase the volume of exchanged goods, the two sides agreed to renew a 1982 special agreement for the settlement of payments through the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) and the Romanian foreign trade bank. The 1982 agreement in this regard will now be renewed for two more years, and will later be renewed automatically unless either party desired otherwise, the statement noted.

Referring to the economic and technical cooperation, especially in the exploration for oil, energy and in the field of electricity, the two sides voiced satisfaction with the performance of the Romanian companies which in the past carried out projects in these fields in Jordan; and Jordan welcomed Romanian firms' participation in future government tenders to implement energy and oil projects in the Kingdom.

It said that a group of experts and consultants representing various Sectors were being involved in the analytical and statistical processes conducted by the centre which is operated by Samir Hiyari, a journalist who is employed by Al Rai and the Jordan Times.

## Opinion poll centre opens in Amman

AMMAN (J.T.) — An opinion poll centre operating through the Arab Press Agency for Press and Publication has been opened in Jordan.

The centre, the first of its kind in the country, conducts analysis of events and developments related to the Gulf issue trying to sound out Jordanian people's views on the situation and questions related to peace or war in the region, visits to the region, like that carried out recently by President Bush, consequences on the region in case of a war with Iraq, and other related topics.

The new centre invited the local and foreign media and representatives of various embassies and Arab and foreign organisations to benefit from its services.

It said that a group of experts and consultants representing various Sectors were being involved in the analytical and statistical processes conducted by the centre which is operated by Samir Hiyari, a journalist who is employed by Al Rai and the Jordan Times.

## Jordan marks World AIDS Day

### Number of victims rising; awareness programmes prepared

AMMAN (J.T.) — "World AIDS Day 1990" was observed here Saturday by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) which organised a day-long programme of discussions with specialists designed to warn the public about the dangers inherent in the killer disease AIDS.

Director of the UNESCO office in Amman Mohammad Kazem reminded the audience at the opening meeting the results of the studies revealed to Arab health ministers in Damascus recently which disclosed that the number of AIDS victims was on the increase in the Arab region and in Asia.

He said that UNESCO in cooperation with the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) had prepared an international programme designed to spread awareness about the disease; this programme serves as an essential strategy to be adopted by countries against the spread of the disease.

Zaheer Zakaria, director of Students Affairs at the Ministry

of Education, told the meeting about the ministry's efforts over the past two years to spread awareness in schools about the killer disease.

He said that 33 per cent of the school graduates could be exposed to the disease because they travel abroad for studies and that the ministry had been active over the past two years in distributing leaflets, showing documentary films and holding meetings with students to spread awareness.

"World AIDS Day has a special place in the history of the AIDS pandemic since 1988. December 1 has been a day of offering messages of compassion, hope, solidarity and understanding about AIDS to every country in the world, north and south, east and west," said a statement issued by UNESCO Saturday.

It said that World AIDS Day emerged from a call, by the world summit of ministers of health on

programmes for AIDS prevention in January 1988, to open channels of communication,

strengthen the exchange of information and expertise and

### HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

#### King cables Ilescu, Ben Sultan

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Saturday sent a cable of good wishes to Romanian President Ion Ilescu on his country's national day. The King wished the president continued health and happiness and the Romanian people further progress and prosperity. The King also cabled President of the United Arab Emirates Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan on his country's national day wishing the UAE continued progress.

#### 28 run for chamber board

AMMAN (Petra) — A total of 28 candidates are vying for seats in the 12-seat board of the Amman Chamber of Commerce which will hold elections Monday. The candidates are grouped in four different blocs in addition to five independents, according to Islam Al Khatib, head of the election committee.

#### Jumaa, Edris exhibit at Yarmouk

IRBD (Petra) — Jordanian artists Mahmoud Assad Jumaa, and Edris Jarrah opened a plastic arts exhibition at Yarmouk University Saturday, displaying 40 paintings. These depict daily life in Jordan, the national heritage and Arab culture.

## Senate committee discusses Gulf

AMMAN (Petra) — The Foreign Affairs Committee at the Upper House of Parliament Saturday discussed various aspects of Jordan's position vis-a-vis the Gulf crisis and the latest political developments on that issue in the light of the American initiative to open dialogue with Iraq.

The committee's rapporteur Hamad Al Farhan said that the committee was concerned over the hardened position of the United States with regard to the issue which could lead to aggression on Iraq. Deputy Prime Minister Salem Massadeh and Foreign Minister Marwan Al Qasem attended the meeting chaired by Ahmad Al Lawzi.

The committee's rapporteur

Hamad Al Farhan said that the

committee was concerned over

the issue which could lead to

aggression on Iraq. Deputy Prime Minister Salem Massadeh and Foreign Minister Marwan Al Qasem attended the meeting chaired by Ahmad Al Lawzi.

# Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1975.

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## 'Talks' will hopefully lead to 'negotiations'

**I**N THE wake of U.S. President George Bush's offer to engage Iraq in "talks," the eyes of the world are busy dissecting the scope and dimensions of such dialogue. To begin with there is indeed a very thin line between "talks" and "negotiations," with the latter signifying more give and take than the former. During the last four months Bush was saying that there was nothing to talk about. Friday's reversal of stance suggests something fundamental has changed. The remarks of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker shed more light on the nature of the projected dialogue between Washington and Baghdad. In highlighting his government's preparedness "to discuss all aspects of the Gulf crisis," Baker seems to keep the door wide open for broad negotiations between the two sides rather than just formal talks on ways and means to implement the 12 U.N. Security Council resolutions on the Kuwaiti crisis. Even when Bush and Baker coupled their bold decision to talk with Iraq with a firm and grim reminder that the U.S. would not waver in its demand for total Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait, restoration of the Kuwaiti government and release of all foreign nationals held in Kuwait and Iraq. The absence of the hitherto firm request that any such envisaged Iraqi withdrawal must be unconditional would suggest that there is indeed a dramatic and profound transformation in the U.S. position. The much hailed U.S. peace overture, therefore, calls for negotiations on the terms and conditions of any Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait. There is suspicion that the peace offer by Bush was the price that Washington may have had to pay to get the consent of the Security Council members to tow its line on resolution 678. The resolution ostensibly authorised the resort to force against Iraq. More relevant than this is the American public opinion and the anti-war position by many eminent members of the U.S. Congress. The leaders of the Congress have put their Chief Executive on notice that they will not tolerate a personal decision to go to war without the advice and consent of Congress.

Yesterday it was Iraq's turn to reciprocate this peace overture. Baghdad's decision to respond in kind to this U.S. offer of dialogue thus offers an opening that needs to be delicately nurtured and developed lest it abort prematurely. But from now on words and actions need to be carefully chosen to avoid a miscarriage of the peace option. The world has gone out of its way to get to this point and it must not be allowed to slip away. For over a decade, Washington and Baghdad were on the best of terms and there is no reason whatsoever why the two countries cannot once again work on the same wavelength. Iraq paid dearly in order to check the encroachment of the Khomeini threat against the entire Gulf region. The geopolitical role of Iraq today remains the same as yesterday. There is no other power in the region that can still thwart any foreign threat against the smaller Arab Gulf states. It would be utterly foolish to imagine that foreign designs on the Gulf have fundamentally changed. There is a great deal, therefore, that unites Iraq with the U.S. on the need to maintain security and stability in the area. This overriding convergence of strategic interests should enable the two sides to find common language once again on the future of the Gulf region.

## ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

Jordanian newspapers Saturday gave guarded welcome to the apparent change in American policy with regard to Iraq, and President Bush's decision to open a dialogue with Baghdad before any withdrawal of Iraqi forces from Kuwait. Al Ra'i daily said the Arabs hope that the meetings between the two leaderships, as suggested by Bush, would not be restricted to giving the Iraqis an ultimatum or a new threat. The Bush statement could usher in a real development in the U.S. administration's stand vis-a-vis the Gulf issue, and it is hoped that this development would have a strategic dimension, and not serve as a mere tactic for the time being, added the paper. For its part, Iraq had been extending a hand to Washington even when the Bush administration was escalating the tension and beating the drums of war loudly to intimidate Iraq; and the Iraqi leaders did not abandon the quest for peace although they had been announcing their determination to fight and defend the Iraqi soil should an aggression be launched on the Iraqi people, the paper noted. All along the Iraqis did not show any adamant position except with regard to their rights, and they had been declaring that they want a peaceful settlement to the Gulf issue along with other outstanding problems, the daily said.

Al Dostour daily welcomed Bush's announcement, but said that any dialogue under the umbrella of Security Council Resolution 678 is not feasible and should take the form of direct negotiations between Baghdad and Washington. The paper said if America wants to solve the issue by peaceful means, it ought to offer concessions, and not to repeat threats which were not accepted by Iraq. The paper noted that unconditional Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait would mean American forces moving in, to occupy that country and replace the Iraqis in a position where they can threaten Iraq. Therefore, it asked which forces should replace the Iraqis in Kuwait, and would the Arab-Israeli conflict remain shelved after Iraq has given up Kuwait? This question must be asked now before any further steps, because of the Arab Nation's bitter experience with Washington which had been supporting the Israeli occupation and aggression, the paper pointed out. We realise that Bush's aim is not only to liberate Kuwait, but also to strip the Iraqis from their power and arms; offering a great favour and service for the Israelis, enabling them to maintain their occupation of Arab lands in Palestine, the paper continued. It said that Bush's statement is shrouded with suspicion since, he said, that the invitation to Aziz and the coming meetings constitute another step in the efforts for peace.

## Did Bush blink first?

By Deborah Zabarenko  
Reuters

WASHINGTON — From early in the Gulf crisis, the question has been: "who will blink first, Bush or Saddam?"

Latest U.S. diplomatic moves have convinced some analysts that George Bush's eyelids are starting to flutter.

On Friday, after the U.N. Security Council endorsed "last resort" military action to force Iraq to leave Kuwait, the U.S. president offered to send Secretary of State James Baker to Baghdad and to receive Iraqi Foreign Minister Tareq Aziz at the White House.

Iraq on Saturday accepted "the idea of the invitation and the meeting."

Bush denied that his gesture had made him look weak in the eyes of the world and those of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

"That's not what this is about," he told a news conference on Friday.

"This is to be sure that he

(Saddam) understands how strongly the president of the United States feels about implementing to a 'T', without concession, the United Nations' positions."

But some analysts see signs of concession in Bush's new willingness to talk to Baghdad without prior withdrawal of Iraqi troops from Kuwait.

"It does send a signal to the world and to our allies, and the signal is: The bargaining has begun," Michael Mandelbaum, a foreign policy expert at the Johns Hopkins school for advanced international studies, told Reuters. "It's not a blink, but it is a flutter."

There seemed to be plenty of what Mandelbaum and others call horse-trading on the way to the Security Council vote, which followed grueling diplomatic tours by Baker and Bush.

"The Bush-Baker team is developing a reputation for precisely this mode of operation," said Andrew Goldberg.

China subsequently re-

frained from vetoing the U.N.

a policy analyst at the Centre for Strategic and International Studies.

"It generally starts out with a very tough rhetorical line, then follows a lot of internal political banting in which the president finds himself bleeding from a thousand cuts and he gives away at the tactical level things he would never give on the strategic level," Goldberg said in an interview.

He thought a compromise with Iraq was probably in the offing, but added that any appearance of American weakness would make it more likely that Arab nations would defect from the multi-national coalition against Iraq.

Mandelbaum agreed that tradeoffs, however unpalatable, are basic component of modern diplomacy.

But he saw something peculiar in Bush's assertion that Baker was being sent to Baghdad to convince Saddam of the seriousness of U.S. intentions in the Gulf.

"If 400,000 troops in Saudi Arabia didn't do it," Mandelbaum said, "I don't know whether the idea of James Baker showing up at the airport in Baghdad is going to do it."

## Iraqi response to Bush initiative

BAGHDAD (R) — Following are excerpts from a statement issued Saturday by Iraq's Revolutionary Command Council accepting U.S. President George Bush's offer for Gulf crisis talks.

The translation by Reuters and is based on an Arabic text issued by the Iraqi News Agency.

"We have been informed of the statements made by Bush yesterday as reported by news agencies and in which he proposed inviting the Iraqi Foreign Minister, (Tareq Aziz), to Washington to meet him and proposes sending his foreign minister (Secretary of State James Baker) to Baghdad to meet with the president, leader Saddam Hussein.

"...The enemy of God, the arrogant president of the United States George Bush had consistently opposed dialogue, expressing his hatred of Arabs

and Muslims and all those who believe in Allah and the world's human values.

"In line with our principles and the morals and principles Allah has asked us to be committed to, we accept the idea of the invitation and the meeting.

When we officially receive the invitation, those concerned in Iraq and their counterparts in the United States will agree on the dates of the exchanged visits and the practical arrangements which suit both sides.

"(The decision to accept was made) despite the fact that the Bush invitation for meetings came after he amassed all that he amassed from brutal might on the holy lands of Arabs and Muslims, despite the unjust resolutions he issued through what was called Security Council resolutions against the people of Iraq, despite the arrogant tone which he used in his invitation and that the invita-

tion came in a peculiar way away from the norms followed by those who desire a serious dialogue and not an act of showmanship designed to justify what he had already decided on — launching aggression against Iraq.

"In view of the fact that the invitation for meetings included an unclear idea whose motives are unclear too — that is to say the American president's invitation to a number of ambassadors to attend the meeting between him and the Iraqi foreign minister — we shall ask the American side for clarifications and reasons.

"If the American side sees it as necessary, Iraq will invite on its part the presence of representatives from nations and parties linked to the outstanding issues in the Arab region to attend the meetings with the American administration whether in Washington or

Baghdad after consulting the concerned parties and on the basis of reciprocation.

"In any case, our endeavour will be, as it has always been, to conduct a profoundly serious dialogue and not pro forma meetings as the American president wants it to use as a pretext before the American and world public opinions and the international community to achieve the objectives which he had planned in the first place.

"Iraq will endeavour to follow up and broaden any window for dialogue rather than the language of threats.

"The principles included in the initiative of the president, leader Saddam Hussein on Aug. 12, 1990 will be our guide in every serious dialogue... Palestine and other occupied Arab territories will be at the forefront of the issues dealt with in any dialogue."

## Bush doubts sanctions alone will force Iraqi pullout Going the 'extra mile' for peace

WASHINGTON — Although President Bush believes the United Nations sanctions imposed on Iraq following its invasion of Kuwait "clearly... are having some effect," he expressed doubt Nov. 30 that those measures alone will compel Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait and restore its legitimate government.

"I can't tell you that the sanctions alone will get the job done," he said at a White House news conference. "And thus, I welcome yesterday's United Nations action" authorising the use of all necessary means to liberate Kuwait from Iraqi occupation if the troops are not withdrawn by Jan. 15.

Bush pointed out that the new democracies of Eastern Europe and the developing countries in Africa and the Western hemisphere "are being severely damaged by the economic effects" of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein's aggression.

The president said those who feel that there is no penalty for "waiting months and months" for the sanctions to force Iraqi compliance with the U.N. resolutions "must consider the devastating damage being done every day to the fragile economies of those countries that can afford it the least."

Following is the transcript of the president's statement and the news conference which followed:

**Bush:** I have a statement, an opening statement, that is a little longer than normal and I'd ask your indulgence, and then I will be glad to respond to questions.

We're in the Gulf because the world must not and cannot reward aggression. And we're there because our vital interests are at stake. And we're in the Gulf because of the brutality of Saddam Hussein. We're dealing with a dangerous dictator, all too willing to use force, who has weapons of mass destruction and is seeking new ones, and who desires to control one of the world's key resources — all at a time in history when the rules of the post-cold war world are being written.

Our objectives remain what they were since the outset. We seek Iraq's immediate and unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait. We seek the restoration of Kuwait's legitimate government. We seek the release of all hostages and the free functioning of all embassies. And we seek the stability and security of this critic-

al region of the world. We are not alone in these goals and objectives. The United Nations, invigorated with a new sense of purpose, is in full agreement. The U.N. Security Council has endorsed 12 resolutions to condemn Iraq's unprovoked invasion and occupation of Kuwait, implement tough economic sanctions to stop all trade in and out of Iraq, and authorise the use of force to compel Saddam to comply.

Saddam Hussein has tried every way he knows how to make this a fight between Iraq and the United States, and clearly, he has failed. Forces of 26 other nations are standing shoulder-to-shoulder with our troops in the Gulf. The fact is that it is not the United States against Iraq, it is Iraq against the world, and there's never been a clearer demonstration of a world united against those countries that can afford it the least.

And as Chairman Alan Greenspan testified just the other day, the increase in oil prices resulting directly from Iraq's invasion is hurting our country, too. And our economy, as I said the other day, is at best in a serious slowdown. And if uncertainty remains in the energy markets, the slowdown will get worse.

I've spelled out once again our reasons for sending troops to the Gulf. Let me tell you the things that concern me most.

First, I put the immorality of the invasion of Kuwait itself. No nation should rape, pillage and blackmail its neighbour, should he possess a nuclear device. We've seen him use chemical weapons on his own people. We've seen him take his own country, one that should be wealthy and prosperous, and turn it into a poor country, all because of insatiable appetite for military equipment and conquest.

I've been asked why I ordered more troops to the Gulf. I remain hopeful that we can achieve a peaceful solution to this crisis. But if force is required, we, and the other 26 countries who have troops in the area, will have enough power to get the job done.

In our country, I know that there are fears against another Vietnam. Let me assure you, should military action be required, this will not be another Vietnam. This will not be a protracted drawn-out war. The forces arrayed are different; the opposition is different; the resupply of Saddam's military would be very different; the countries united against him in the United Nations are different, the topography of Kuwait is different, and the motivation of our all-volunteer force is superb.

I'm deeply concerned about our own embassy in Kuwait. The flag is still flying there; a handful of beleaguered Americans remain inside the embassy, unable to come and go. This treatment of our embassy violates every civilized principle of diplomacy. And it demeans our people, it demeans our country. And I am determined that this embassy, as called for under Security Council Resolution 674, be fully replenished and our people free to come home.

Let me repeat. We have no argument with the people of Iraq. Indeed, we have only friendship for the people there. And, further, I repeat that we have no desire to keep one single Amer-

ican soldier in the Gulf a single day longer than is necessary to achieve the objectives set out above.

No one wants to see a peaceful solution to this crisis more than I do, and, at the same time, no one is more determined than I am to see Saddam's aggression reversed.

And lastly, people now caution patience. The United States and the entire world have been patient. I will continue to be patient, but yesterday's U.N. resolution, the 13th by the Security Council, properly says to Saddam Hussein, "time is running out. You must leave Kuwait, and we've given you time to do exactly that."

I'm deeply concerned about

Saddam's

efforts

to acquire

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weapons.

Imagine his ability

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So I'm deeply concerned about

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# 'Has the U.S.-led coalition blinked?'

(Continued from page 4)

Question: Now that you have a clear-cut U.N. resolution on use of force, doesn't that force you into a position — if these talks between the secretary of state break down — doesn't this force you into the position of having to use force on Jan. 15 if Saddam Hussein hasn't left? And if not, won't we be seen as the one that blinked first?

Answer: No, the date was not a date at which point force had to be used.

Q: If I could just follow up with another question. Are you going to ask Congress for approval of this — this resolution? Would you like to see Congress pass the same kind of resolution as the United Nations?

A: I'd love to see Congress pass a resolution enthusiastically endorsing what the United Nations has done, yes. But we're in consultation on that, and I have no plan to call a special session.

But we will continue our consultations. They'll follow, incidentally, today, this meeting with the leadership. So I'll get a little better feel for that as we go along.

Q: You say you're confident that American troops will prevail against Saddam if called upon.

A: Oh, absolutely.

Q: But at what price? How many Americans?

A: Well, I can't give you that, any figures, of course. But I can say that the movement of this additional force safeguards the lives of every American and everyone of our allies in the Gulf.

Q: In recent days, senior members of the administration have emphatically rejected the idea of any special emissaries or diplomatic envoys to or from Iraq to discuss this on your part. What changed your mind, sir?

A: The U.N. resolution, I think, has a good chance of making Saddam Hussein understand what it is he's up against. I hope this will do it. But I am convinced that these two direct meetings that I've discussed here will guarantee to all the people of the world, certainly to the American people, that Saddam Hussein is not misinterpreting — I keep hearing "well, people won't give him the news." Unlike the president of the United States, who gets good news and bad news very faithfully, I am told that Saddam Hussein's troops don't bring him the bad news. And I'm told that he is somewhat isolated. And I think this U.N. resolution will help in a sense to de-isolate him. And I think the two proposals that I've made here will help. And so, it's just going the extra step, that's what it is. And it's a decision that I personally made.

Q: You indicate that this date is not actually a deadline for the use of force, merely a date after which force would be permissible. How do you avoid the impression, should that date come and go without military action, that the U.S.-led coalition has, in fact, blinked?

A: Well, we've got to look at the situation. But I don't think there will ever be a perception that the United States is going to blink in this situation. That's why I had some of the words in this statement that I had.

Q: You've just spoken about the weapons of mass destruction

and nuclear weapons, and also that one of your goals is to try to reach stability in the region. Can you reach stability in the region with Saddam Hussein in power?

A: I think most countries — members of the United Nations — feel that there have to be some safeguards put into effect in terms of guaranteeing the security and stability of the Gulf. And so, I think that the status quo ante will not be enough, and I think there will be — there are sanctions in place now, and I think it would be very proper to discuss what those safeguards should be after there has been a total compliance with the United Nations resolutions.

Q: I just noticed that when you were originally — when you outlined your goals you included stability in the region you seemed to summarise them when you talk about these talks with Saddam Hussein, but you didn't — you only mentioned the first three; you didn't mention stability of those countries for the U.N. action?

A: I can't give you the answer to that because I don't really know. But I expect that there is enthusiasm in all quarters of those countries for the U.N. action.

Q: And of those 26 nations that you list in the area, how many of those are equally committed to offensive action, rather than just defensive action?

A: I can't give you the answer to that because I don't really know.

Q: With all respect, shouldn't you know how many would follow your troops into battle?

A: I know that what I said is true about the — if we have to go into battle, and I am satisfied I know enough about that. I went over in detail, as one will imagine a president should because I have the responsibility as Commander-in-Chief, what might happen if we have to use force. I repeat, I hope we'll never have to have one single shot fired in anger.

Q: Iraq has been constantly calling for dialogue. Aren't you concerned that those two missions, Tareq Aziz and James Baker, will lead Saddam Hussein to claim that the United States is showing a sign of weakness?

A: That's what?

Q: That the United States is weakening?

A: Because Baker goes to Baghdad.

Q: Aren't you concerned that that would be the position of Saddam Hussein?

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an intelligent fellow, and he — but I don't think he has access to absolutely all — maybe he does — but I am not going to err on the side of underestimating what it comes to this question.

Q: Your announcement about Tareq Aziz and Secretary Baker — have you had any signals, any indications from the Iraqis, that they would welcome this, that they are indeed looking for this kind of communication?

A: No. The only thing I've heard is that they want to talk. There's an opportunity, but no, I have not had any — even diplomatic signals or signals of other kinds.

Q: And of those 26 nations that you list in the area, how many of those are equally committed to offensive action, rather than just defensive action?

A: I can't give you the answer to that because I don't really know.

Q: With all respect, shouldn't you know how many would follow your troops into battle?

A: I know that what I said is true about the — if we have to go into battle, and I am satisfied I know enough about that. I went over in detail, as one will imagine a president should because I have the responsibility as Commander-in-Chief, what might happen if we have to use force. I repeat, I hope we'll never have to have one single shot fired in anger.

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Q: And what I was wondering was, we all know how important your children are to you. Do you feel that this issue is important enough to you that you could conceive of giving up one of your children for it?

A: You know, you've put your finger on a very difficult question. People say to me, "How many lives, how many lives can you expend?" Each one is precious. And I don't want to reminisce, but I've been there. I know what it's like to have fallen comrades and see young kids die in battle.

And that's why — because of that question that weighs on my mind, I added that language this morning about how this will not be a Vietnam. They can criticise me for moving force, and if we've got



## Crise du Golfe: dialogue sous la menace

Après une longue période de statu quo et de blocage, l'ONU et les États-Unis ont pris jeudi deux mesures destinées à précipiter le règlement de la crise du Golfe, par la paix ou par la guerre. La clef de voûte de ce nouveau dispositif diplomatique est une date sur le calendrier, la date butoir du 15 janvier prochain au-delà de laquelle les Nations-Unies autorisent les États membres à faire usage de la force

«Dans le but de faire un pas en supplémentaire en direction de la paix, j'invite le ministre irakien des affaires étrangères à venir à Washington pour me rencontrer et je demande au Secrétaire d'Etat James Baker de se rendre à Bagdad pour y rencontrer Saddam Hussein». En apparence, la déclaration surprise prononcée vendredi par le président américain George Bush ouvre la porte à une solution négociée de la crise du Golfe. Cela d'autant plus qu'elle a été acceptée hier par les autorités irakiennes. Elle ne doit pas pourtant faire oublier qu'elle est intervenue le lendemain de l'adoption de la résolution 678 des Nations-Unies, qui réitére dans son premier paragraphe les résolutions précédentes (exigeant pour l'essentiel un retrait total du Koweït), qui constate que l'Irak ne s'y est pas soumis à ce jour et qui autorise, à partir du 15 janvier prochain, les États membres à user de «tous les moyens» pour obtenir satisfaction.

Proposition américaine, cette résolution a été également défendue par James Baker qui a fait en dix jours un tour du monde de tous ses homologues du Conseil de Sécurité (sauf Cuba) afin d'obtenir au plus vite le minimum de neuf voix sur quinze et l'absence de veto d'un des cinq membres

contre l'Irak pour obtenir sa soumission aux résolutions antérieures, c'est à dire, pour l'essentiel, un retrait total du territoire koweïtien. Cette menace étant brandie et ces exigences réaffirmées, Washington offre à Bagdad ce qu'il refuse de lui accorder jusqu'à malgré les demandes répétées de ce dernier: le dialogue à haut niveau entre responsables des deux pays. Reste à savoir si dans un tel contexte

absolu.

### Stratégie

L'imperatif américain consistait surtout à obtenir l'adoption de cette résolution avant la fin du mois de novembre. Depuis deux jours en effet, la présidence du Conseil de Sécurité est passée des Etats-Unis au Yémen, pays favorable à la restauration du Koweït mais hostile à la présence de troupes étrangères en Arabie. C'est donc in-extremis que les Etats-Unis ont obtenu le vote de leur texte.

En accélérant par cette résolution l'évolution de la crise du Golfe, Washington a obéi à des impératifs de stratégie. Les responsables militaires américains ont fait savoir à plusieurs reprises que toute action de force dans cette partie désertique du monde ne pouvait être entreprise que pendant une période relativement courte allant approximativement de novembre à mars. Au delà, la chaleur et les vents de sable notamment risquent de poser de sérieux problèmes. Au cours des huit ans de guerre entre l'Iran et l'Irak, par exemple, la plupart des grandes offensives qui se sont déroulées dans la région de Bassorah, au sud de l'Irak, ont toujours eu lieu à cette période de l'année.

Officiellement, la résolution est présentée comme une dernière tentative d'obtenir un retrait pacifique et consenti du Koweït, en insistant sur la menace d'une offensive militaire en cas de refus de l'Irak. Mais l'argument est à double tranchant. Si Saddam Hussein céde à la menace, l'argument aura fonctionné au bénéfice de la paix. Si Saddam résiste, en revanche, les Etats défenseurs de la souveraineté koweïtienne n'auront d'autre choix désormais que d'employer la force pour rester crédibles, sous peine d'offrir à Saddam la grande victoire psychologique d'avoir perdu à juste titre la résolution 678 comme un coup de bluff. Sauf traiter surprenant de Saddam Hussein, la résolution 678 rend donc plus probable que jamais l'éclatement d'un conflit armé. Même si l'ex-

pression «tous les moyens» n'évoque pas nécessairement l'usage de la force et si rien n'oblige les Etats membres à agir dès l'expiration du délai.

Israël ne s'y est pas trompé qui a abandonné sa politique de profil bas adoptée depuis le début de la crise pour décréter l'état d'alerte avancé et multiplier les mises en garde. Le général Avi-ahar Bin Nun, chef de l'armée de l'air israélienne a annoncé que ses experts s'efforçaient activement de mettre au point des techniques permettant à Israël de devancer une attaque irakienne «dans les mois, dans les semaines, voire dans les jours et les heures à venir». En Allemagne, Helmut Lüpertz, porte-parole du parti écolo-pacifiste des Verts a estimé que le Conseil avait donné là «son accord pour l'amorçage d'une bombe», ajoutant que «ceci qui pratique des ultimatums contre des dictateurs obstinés s'oblige à déclencher lui-même l'explosion». Cela enfin, a justifié son vote contre, en dénonçant le «chèque en blanc» ainsi donné par le Conseil de Sécurité aux Etats-Unis et en affirmant que l'objectif des Etats-Unis n'est pas de renverser l'Irak du Koweït mais le renversement du président irakien Saddam Hussein, ce qui signifie que la guerre est «inévitable».

Pour ce qui est de l'ouverture du dialogue offerte par le président Bush, les interprétations varient. Les plus optimistes estiment qu'elle peut aboutir à une véritable négociation. Le Yémen, notamment, avait affirmé dès l'adoption de la résolution que l'Irak était ouvert au dialogue et que si le président Bush envoyait un émissaire personnel à Bagdad, à Genève ou dans n'importe quelle capitale arabe pour rencontrer un dirigeant irakien ce serait une étape très positive.

D'autres en revanche estiment que cette offre de dialogue n'est de la part des Etats-Unis qu'une manœuvre tactique destinée à pouvoir justifier une prochaine action militaire, en affirmant que tout a été fait (en vain) pour obtenir une solution négociée. Ce pourrait être aussi le moyen de

calmer l'irritation de Saddam Hussein face à cette nouvelle résolution pour le dissuader d'ouvrir le feu avant l'échéance du 15 janvier et permettre aux nouveaux renforts américains (300 avions militaires servis par quelque 10.000 aviateurs et techniciens) d'atteindre le Golfe et d'être opérationnels.

Il n'est pas tout à fait impossible, toutefois, que le geste d'ouverture de Washington permette à Saddam Hussein sans perdre la face de faire un geste

Jean-Marc Bordes

### Le précédent coréen

Ce n'est pas la première fois que les Nations-Unies autorisent l'usage de la force contre un des membres de l'Organisation.

En 1950, soit cinq ans après la création de l'ONU, le Conseil de Sécurité avait donné son accord pour l'usage de la force, afin de repousser les forces de Corée du Nord ayant envahi la république de Corée du Sud.

Cette première et historique décision avait été prise le 27 juillet 1950 par l'ensemble des membres du Conseil, à l'époque où le nombre de onze, mais avec l'absence notable de l'URSS qui avait refusé de siéger.

Les Etats avaient alors donné l'ordre à leur aviation et à leur marine de soutenir activement les forces militaires sud-coréennes avant de déployer leur armée de terre.

Face à ses difficultés financières

## La Jordanie doit revoir son système fiscal

Accroître les recettes nationales par le moyen efficace d'une fiscalité accrue est le seul moyen pour la Jordanie de compenser la diminution de ses recettes. Une diminution causée par la chute de l'aide financière arabe, notamment depuis l'éclatement de la crise du Golfe, comme nous l'avons expliquée dans un article précédent (voir «Le Jourdain» du 18 novembre).

La fiscalité actuellement en vigueur en Jordanie, qu'elle soit directe ou indirecte, n'a pas atteint le niveau qu'il faudrait pour parvenir à augmenter les recettes fiscales et atténuer la dépendance financière vis-à-vis de l'extérieur. Cette fiscalité réduite ne provient pas seulement de la structure économique du pays, mais aussi de la nature du système fiscal et des moyens d'applanter ses dispositions.

En 1988, le prélevement fiscal ne dépassait pas 18% du Produit National Brut (PNB). Ce pourcentage représente certes un doublème réalisé sur les deux dernières années, mais il faut signaler que le potentiel fiscal pour un pays en voie de développement est généralement considéré comme pouvant varier entre 30% et 40% du PNB. Il apparaît donc que le potentiel fiscal inexploité en Jordanie est encore important.

Pourtant, une étude récente a montré que la pression fiscale en Jordanie dépasse déjà le potentiel des citoyens. La question qui se pose dès lors est de savoir comment il est possible d'augmenter les recettes fiscales sans aggraver la pression sur les citoyens et des produits agricoles.

Un député a mis l'accent sur ce sujet en insistant sur les maladies des plantes et la souffrance des agriculteurs causée par les pertes permanentes qu'ils engendrent la baisse des prix sur le marché.

«La plupart des agriculteurs ne gagnent même pas de quoi nourrir délicemment leurs familles, dira-t-il, ce qui est dû essentiellement aux pertes résultant des maladies qui attaquent leurs plantes, notamment dans le sud de la vallée du Jourdain.» Il propose par conséquent la création d'un comité au ministère de l'agriculture, doté d'un rôle consultatif et préventif, pour mener une enquête sur les origines de ces maladies.

Pourtant, le problème le plus grave reste encore celui du retour des émigrés. Beaucoup de jeunes gens jordaniens qui se trouvent à l'étranger après avoir perdu leur poste au Koweït, se demandent comment ils pourront financer les besoins de leur famille et de leurs enfants. Un ingénieur jordanien confirme qu'il a essayé vain de trouver un travail et qu'il est obligé de vivre maintenant avec sa femme et quatre enfants chez ses parents, qui hébergent déjà leur fille et ses enfants chez eux!

Tous ces émigrés se sont vus refuser du travail simplement parce qu'ils n'ont pas accompli leur service militaire, étant à l'étranger, explique un député. Leur incapacité à payer la somme qui leur permettrait d'être dispensés les oblige à vivre dans des conditions assez difficiles. Ayant fait le choix de rentrer en Jordanie, il leur est maintenant interdit de rentrer au Koweït pour reprendre leur travail.

Agriculture

Quelques députés ont évoqué également les problèmes des agriculteurs. Ces derniers ont été gravement affectés par la réorientation des plantations vers les céréales, préconisée par le ministère de l'agriculture jordanien. Il

Les impôts directs représentent

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## EN BREF

Shamir. Le parlement israélien a repoussé lundi, par 57 voix contre 48, quatre motions de censure déposées par l'opposition de gauche contre les déclarations du Premier ministre Yitzhak Shamir, la semaine dernière, sur le droit des Juifs à s'installer «dans le grand Israël de la Méditerranée au Jourdain». Un député du Shinouï (parti du centre) estime que les déclarations de M. Shamir mettaient en danger la poursuite de l'immigration juive d'URSS. Le ministre de la police a répondu que les propos de M. Shamir avaient un caractère «purement idéologique» et n'impliquaient aucun changement dans la politique israélienne de ne pas envoyer d'immigrants dans les territoires occupés de Gaza et de Cisjordanie.

Liberation. Le président irakien Saddam Hussein a décidé lundi d'autoriser le départ d'un «certain nombre» d'otages américains avec leurs familles venues en Irak pour leur rendre visite. Une trentaine de femmes d'otages américaines étaient attendues dans la capitale irakienne pour profiter de l'offre de l'Irak de passer les fêtes de fin d'année avec leurs époux. Lors de la rencontre avec les familles, le chef de l'Etat irakien a réitéré la volonté de son pays d'instaurer une paix globale dans la région.

Major. Encore inconnu du grand public il y a quelques mois, John Major est devenu mardi dernier le nouveau Premier ministre conservateur britannique après la démission surprise de Margaret Thatcher. Ancien chancelier de l'Echiquier, Major a franchi tous les échelons ministériels en un temps record, une ascension qui doit autant à sa loyauté qu'à son pragmatisme politique. Contrairement aux aristocrates du gouvernement, il vient d'un milieu populaire et a passé une partie de son enfance à Brixton, quartier pauvre de la banlieue de Londres, où la famille avait du dénêfager après la faillite de son père. Avant de monter un petit commerce, Tom Major a été un artiste de music-hall et, à l'occasion, un trapéziste de cirque. Il s'est lancé très tôt dans la politique avec les Jeunes conservateurs. Pro-européen, il a proposé cette semaine l'idée d'un «ECU lourd» comme alternative au plan Delors sur l'union économique et monétaire.

Tchad. Les rebelles d'Idriss Deby viennent de remporter une victoire importante sur les forces gouvernementales tchadiennes en s'emparant jeudi, sans combat, d'Abéché, la plus importante ville de l'est du Tchad. En confirmant la chute d'Abéché, un porte-parole du ministère français des Affaires Etrangères a précisé vendredi qu'il n'y a pas eu d'action contre les soldats français, présents sur place pour défendre le Tchad contre des attaques libyennes. «La mission des forces françaises n'est pas d'intervenir dans les affrontements entre Tchadiens», a-t-il souligné. Fuyant l'avancée des troupes rebelles, le chef de l'Etat tchadien, Hissine Habré, a quitté N'Djamena la nuit dernière avec ses troupes. Les 1.000 civils français vivant au Tchad ont été regroupés en vue d'un rapatriement.

Tunnel. Un ouvrier français et un britannique ont abattu hier matin la dernière paroi de craie bleue qui, à 100m sous la Manche, sépare les équipes françaises et britanniques dans le tunnel qui doit relier en 1993 la France à la Grande-Bretagne. En ce qui concerne la fiscalité indirecte (droits de douane, droits de timbre et d'enregistrement), elle tient une place dominante. Cette fiscalité est destinée à financer un volume déterminé des dépenses publiques. Elle couvre 82% des recettes fiscales, soit 39% des recettes nationales (toujours en 1988).

En fait, le gouvernement jordanien, au cours des deux années passées (1988 et 1989), a fortement augmenté les taxes sur la consommation et les importations.

Pour être efficace, le système fiscal exige aussi un personnel compétent et capable, qui connaît bien la loi, les conditions et les techniques de contrôle. Il nécessite un recrutement de personnes ayant une formation théorique supérieure, des diplômes en droit et en économie. Une formation technique du personnel pourra être réalisée directement au sein de la Direction ou prendre la forme de stages dans des pays étrangers, puisqu'il n'existe pas à ce jour d'école nationale des impôts. Comme le souligne le professeur Gaudeamus, «les pays qui ne disposent que d'une administration fiscale imperfectement entraînée se contenteront de techniques fiscales rudimentaires».

En outre, le travail dans l'administration doit être contrôlé par des responsables compétents.

La valeur de ce contrôle est grande, car il garantit l'honnêteté et la dignité de l'administration

faute de quoi on ne peut échapper aux risques de scandale fiscal et de corruption parmi les agents du fisc.

Il convient enfin de lutter contre la fraude fiscale. La fraude est une contravention aux décisions du législateur et aux mesures d'application de l'administration.

En Jordanie, on ne dispose pas d'une évaluation précise de ce phénomène, mais on peut dire sans aucun risque de se tromper que le pourcentage de fraude est assez élevé. Elle porte d'ailleurs plus sur les impôts directs, surtout les impôts assis sur l'ensemble du revenu, que sur les impôts liés à la dépense.

Une campagne contre la fraude

et un système informatique moderne permettant d'obtenir des informations réelles sur les revenus et les conditions de vie de chaque contribuable sont deux armes efficaces contre la fraude fiscale.

On le voit, la Jordanie ne manque pas de potentiel fiscal.

En s'appuyant sur une forte volonté politique et civique, elle peut parvenir à accroître considérablement ses recettes nationales, et partant son indépendance, financière et politique.

Dr Wahib Alami

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## Attentats contre Israël

Israël a fait face cette semaine à une multiplication des incidents le long de ses frontières, marquée notamment par un attentat sanglant perpétré dimanche dernier près de sa frontière avec l'Egypte et par une attaque suicide au Liban sud.

Lors de l'attentat soupçonné d'avoir été perpétré par un combattant égyptien, Ayman Hassan, quatre soldats israéliens ont été tués et 23 autres personnes blessées, dont cinq grièvement. Près de la frontière égyptienne, à une vingtaine de km au nord d'Elat, Hassan, vêtu d'une tenue de camouflage militaire a ouvert le feu à l'arme automatique contre quatre véhicules militaires puis contre un autobus qui circulait sur la route reliant Elat à Qadesh Barnea, au sud d'Israël.

Ayman Hassan, 22 ans, affirme qu'il n'appartenait à aucun groupe politique ou religieux. Mais il prétend avoir agi par révolte contre la répression exercée par Israël sur les Palestiniens des territoires occupés.

Quelques heures plus tard, deux soldats israéliens ont été légèrement blessés près du château de Beaufort, au Liban sud, lors d'une opération suicide menée par une femme qui s'est donné la mort en faisant sauter devant une patrouille israélienne, la charge d'explosifs qu'elle transportait. Il s'agit de la première attaque à la «bombe humaine» contre une patrouille de l'armée israélienne au Liban sud depuis plus d'un an.

Le parti syrien national social a affirmé que l'attentat avait été perpétré par une de ses militaires dans le secteur central de la «zone de sécurité», créée et occupée par Israël. Cet attentat, selon le PSNS, a fait plusieurs tués parmi les soldats israéliens.

Autre sujet d'inquiétude pour Israël, la multiplication depuis quelque temps des infiltrations à travers la ligne de cessez-le-feu jordanio-israélienne, longue de 370 km et longtemps considérée comme une frontière de paix-de-faito.

Confronté à cette multiplication d'incidents, Israël estime que la montée de l'intégrisme religieux chez ses voisins arabes est devenu un danger majeur pour sa sécurité.

Il y a en Egypte, en Syrie et en Jordanie une propagande fanatique extrémiste qui répand la haine contre nous et il y a des gens qui représentent à leur compte cette propagande», a affirmé dimanche dernier M. Shamir devant une délégation de la communauté juive française.

Météorologie

## La foudre sous surveillance

«Et du haut de l'Olympe, Zeus brandit la foudre...» Il est fort probable que c'est à ce phénomène météorologique que, bien avant la mythologie grecque, l'Homme dut la possession du feu...

Manifestation terrifiante aux conséquences parfois cataclysmiques, la foudre fut longtemps reconnue comme d'origine divine. Ce n'est que vers le milieu du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle que des savants s'y intéressèrent de plus près, bien souvent au péril de leur vie: Franklin et bien d'autres

## PASSEZ-MOI MON FRANÇAIS

### La rubrique de Flavia Romero

Sans bras, je t'embrasse avec le cœur,  
Sans jambes, je viens vers toi avec amour

Ave Egeria,

Il était une fois le petit fils d'un roi que les Djinns ont visité en songe. Sa nuit fut éclairée par une fougue dansante de langues de feu de mille couleurs qui se déchirèrent de temps en temps pour laisser entrevoir une image, toujours la même: une petite femme au teint clair, dans un palais de glace: une voix puissante et bienveillante rythmait cette danse du feu par un refrain: «elle te donnera quatre fils purs et beaux et une fillette bouton de rose. Cinq enfants plus mille».

Le prince se réveilla le matin sous l'emprise du rêve. Il fallait absolument qu'il trouve cette femme qui lui était destinée comme épouse mais le rêve lui semblait, lui prince d'Arabie, plutôt énigmatique. Un palais de glace? Mille et cinq enfants? Il fallait toutefois qu'il obéisse. Le grand livre du destin garde ses secrets. Après avoir demandé, comme le veut la tradition, la permission des anciens de la famille et leur bénédiction, il s'assit en selle sur son destrier et partit.

L'œil noir et vif, le sabot nerveux et sensible, le cou arqué, le cheval marchait, trottait, galopait sans effort et, puisqu'il était magique, fils de Pégase, il s'envolait et planait dans l'air quand il le fallait.

Ils traverserent ainsi des déserts et des oasis, une mer d'un bleu éblouissant et s'arrêtèrent sur une île de toute beauté, regarder la princesse mère peindre ses rêves et la vie de couleurs éclatantes. Puis reprirent leur chemin. Ils traverseront de grandes villes et des petites, toujours à la recherche de ce palais de glace et d'un visage de femme.

Finalement, au bout du monde, se profil à l'horizon une terre toute blanche et voilà la femme de son rêve les bras tendus, dans un palais de glace, entourée d'ours blancs et d'hermines immaculées.

Le prince la prit en selle et reprit son voyage pour la ramener au pays où poussent les palmiers.

Leur retour fut fêté par la famille et par les Djinns qui remplirent le ciel d'éblouissants feux d'artifices. Comme voulait la prédiction, le jeune couple fut bénit par la naissance de cinq gourous et d'une fillette aussi pétillante qu'un jet d'eau de source. Mais les mille enfants arrivent aussi. Attirés par les bras tendus de la petite princesse, il en arrive tous les jours. Ce ne sont pas des enfants comme les autres: ils ont les jambes lésées et quelques fois les bras aussi. Ils rampent pour la rejoindre avec les yeux pleins d'espoir. Elle leur donne une raison de vie, ils la paient en retour avec un courage indomptable, la volonté ferme de s'améliorer dans une étonnante atmosphère de sérénité et d'espoir.

Je sais que la princesse a besoin de nous tous. Tout ce que nous pouvons donner est accepté avec reconnaissance: argent, jouets, vêtements, maillots de bains, agrès et volontariat. Il ne faut rien craindre: aucun des enfants, même ceux qui sont les plus lésés, n'a le regard de la victime. On se rend compte, en jouant et en travaillant avec ces petits handicapés, que les rôles s'inversent, et ce sont eux finalement qui nous soignent. On retourne chez soi, plein de sérénité et de douceur.

Vale, Egeria!

Toute donation peut être adressée au centre Al-Hussein pour les handicapés physiques, 7ème cercle, PO Box 5102, Amman. Il faut savoir que le centre a besoin de 275 dinars par jour pour continuer à exister, sans parler des nombreux autres enfants qui ont désespérément besoin d'aide.

**[Pour être bien conseillé, Bush, encore vice-président, entreprit de faire construire un ordinateur super-géant (baptisé Aristote) doté d'un système d'intelligences artificielles extrêmement perfectionné. Tout récemment mis en service, celui-ci avait déjà convaincu Bush qu'il était dans l'intérêt des Etats-Unis de laisser les Arabes résoudre eux-mêmes la crise du Golfe.]**

Sa partie de golf achevée, Bush revint dans son bureau oval et s'empessa de décrypter le téléphone rose et de composer le numéro de code d'Aristote. Immédiatement, il entendit une voix devenue familière lui dire:

-Bonjour M. le président. Je suis à votre disposition.

-Bonjour Aristote. J'aimerais discuter aujourd'hui d'un conflit qui traîne depuis longtemps et qui commence à embarrasser sérieusement notre politique au Moyen-Orient: le conflit palestinien.

-Dans cette affaire, une chose me chiffonne: pourquoi au départ avoir choisi de soutenir Israël?

-On pensait avoir un Etat «à nous» au Moyen-Orient. Sa mission devait être de faire la police dans le coin, de déstabiliser et de retarder le développement des pays de la région et de nous aider du point de vue «intelligence». Moyennant tout cela, on était prêt à lui refiler quelques milliards par an.

-En pratique, Israël a échoué dans la plupart des objectifs énumérés. Dans la crise du Golfe, non seulement il n'a été daucune utilité (on a dû envoyer nos propres forces en Arabie), mais il a constitué un fardeau extrêmement embarrassant. Par ailleurs, il s'est avéré en plusieurs occasions, et en particulier dans l'affaire de nos Marines au Liban d'octobre 1983, qu'Israël était prêt à sacrifier nos intérêts aux siens: le Mossad, quoiqu'au courant de l'attentat à la voiture piégée a fait exprès de ne pas en informer la CIA; cela nous a finalement coûté 241 victimes au Liban.

-N'empêche que, du point de vue de la déstabilisation et de la création d'obstacles au progrès des pays de la région, Israël a parfaitement réussi!

-Ça a conduit à la naissance du terrorisme ainsi qu'à la haine et à la méfiance de tous les peuples de la région à notre égard. Ce n'est indéniablement pas là notre intérêt. C'est plutôt -et encore

avaient imaginé de lancer des cerfs-volants par temps d'orage en les retenant par une ficelle mouillée! Nous lui devons néanmoins l'invention du paratonnerre.

Il n'en demeure pas moins que la foudre frappe souvent et qu'on ne compte pas moins d'un million d'arcs électriques chaque année entre le sol de la France et le ciel, avec parfois des recrudescences telles que le 8 mai 1989, où la foudre s'est abattue plus de 25.000 fois en cette seule journée.

Manifestation terrifiante aux conséquences parfois cataclysmiques, la foudre fut longtemps reconnue comme d'origine divine. Ce n'est que vers le milieu du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle que des savants s'y intéressèrent de plus près, bien souvent au péril de leur vie: Franklin et bien d'autres



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Beaucoup de connaissances ont été acquises ces dernières années sur les mécanismes qui conditionnent l'orage et l'apparition de la foudre. Il suffit d'une dizaine de kilomètres carrés de sol surchauffé pour que l'air propulsé par la chaleur et souvent aidé par le relief, monte en une colonne verticale si rapide qu'il se condense en gouttelettes d'eau et devient un nuage monstrueux de 5 à 12.000 mètres d'épaisseur, qui peut se déplacer à plus de 100 km/h en accumulant une énorme quantité d'énergie.

L'air, qui se refroidit trop vite à cette altitude, se fige en cristaux de glace: la différence de température entre le sol et le sommet du nuage crée un véritable condensateur accumulant plusieurs millions de volts entre le sommet du nuage (pôle positif) et sa base (pôle négatif). L'ensemble planant au-dessus du sol, c'est à dire la Terre, elle-même pôle fortement positif: les niveaux atteints sont tellement élevés qu'une décharge devient inévitable.

C'est pourquoi une société privée a installé en France un réseau de surveillance unique au monde qui fonctionne depuis trois ans. Le système «Météorage-Franklin» a disposé sur l'ensemble du territoire 18 capteurs auxquels s'ajoutent 3 autres capteurs mis en place en Suisse (les orages étant particulièrement redoutables en montagne).

Autant de zones surveillées où le capteur enregistre les ondes radio-électriques chaque fois que la foudre frappe, permettant de localiser l'orage dans un rayon de 300 km avec une précision de 1 à 3 km. Mis au point par l'ONERA (Etudes et Recherches Aérospatiales), le dispositif commercialisé par la société «Dimensions» utilise l'interférométrie magnétique et les variations du champ électrostatique, le tout relayé sur les écrans Minitel des abonnés.

Une version légère, d'un coût de 120.000 FF permet aux industriels concernés d'être prévenus à temps et d'interrompre ou de différer des opérations sensibles (fabrication de composants électroniques, d'explosifs, de produits instables ou inflammables,

etc.). Une version plus élaborée est destinée aux aéroports, à l'armée (explosifs, missiles...) et aux centres spatiaux, dont celui de Kourou, en Guyane.

Il est bien évident que cela intéresse beaucoup les scientifiques, qui disposent ainsi d'un moyen efficace pour étudier de plus près les orages et constituer des archives indiscutables: jusqu'à présent, ils pouvaient compter que sur les bonnes volontés locales qui leur signalaient qu'il y avait eu un orage tel jour à telle heure et, bien évidemment, sans aucune mesure quantitative. Chose curieuse à ce sujet: on a constaté que les plus violents orages, les «super-bolets» à 400.000 ampères, étaient l'apanage des orages d'hiver, d'octobre à mai.

Il est non moins évident que cette surveillance des zones orageuses joue un rôle dans le domaine de la protection civile, et notamment en ce qui concerne les épouvantables incendies de torréfaction que la foudre allume chaque année. Il y a aussi les assureurs qui ne négligent pas ces données leur permettant de déjouer des manœuvres abusives... Loin d'être un luxe scientifique, la localisation des orages a donné le coup de foudre à bien des secteurs de l'économie française.

Jean Chabrier

### Les collaborateurs du «Jourdain» sous les feux de la rampe

Vous connaissez tous les talents de plume de Flavia Romero et de Sami Kamal, qui aujourd'hui encore jettent sur cette page les lumières de leur colonne hebdomadaire. Vous aurez bientôt l'occasion de les voir et les entendre puisqu'ils animeront, tous les deux cette semaine, l'actualité culturelle d'Amman.

C'est de cuisine -une de ses passions- que Flavia Romero parla, le mercredi 5 à 18h, au Centre Culturel Français.

Intitulée «Que le feu soit... et la cuisine fuit», cette conférence retracera l'histoire de la préparation des mets et de la confection des plats. Une histoire qui reflète les cultures propres à chaque espace ou période de civilisation et dont les origines sont autant de mystère...

Cette conférence s'inscrit dans le cadre de la semaine de la cuisine française qui se tient au Mariott du 2 au 8 décembre.

De son côté, au Goethe Institut, Sami Kamal présentera chacun des films du festival Fritz Lang qui débutera le mardi 4 à 20h pour se terminer le 29 décembre. (Voir FOCUS).

Sami Kamal, diplômé du département cinéma et télévision de l'Université de Californie à Los Angeles (UCLA), évoquera l'âge d'or du cinéma allemand l'expressionnisme dont Fritz Lang, qui aura 100 ans cette année, est un des plus prestigieux représentants.

Deux prestations à ne pas manquer, si la culture vous intéresse et vous émeut...

Sans blague!

## Aristote et l'affaire palestinienne

très discutablement dans l'intérêt des Sionistes, qui continuent à réver de réaliser le Grand Israël.

-Néanmoins, comment envisager d'assurer un écolelement régulier du pétrole de la région sans un Israël omniprésent?

-N'est-ce pas l'opposé qui s'est produit? Ce qu'il faudrait plutôt reconnaître, c'est que ce sont les agressions et l'intransigeance d'Israël qui ont été jusque-là les seuls responsables des accès de violence dans l'approvisionnement en pétrole: en 1956, l'attaque tri-partite contre l'Egypte, dans laquelle Israël a joué un rôle prépondérant, a bloqué le canal de Suez pendant plusieurs mois. Ce canal a encore été bloqué par la suite, mais cette fois-ci pour huit ans, à cause de la guerre déclenchée par l'Etat hébreu en juin 1967. L'embargo décrété sur le pétrole par les pays arabes producteurs à l'automne 1973, quelque résultat de la guerre déclenchée cette fois «contre Israël» par l'Egypte et la Syrie, n'était en fait que la conséquence logique et prévisible de notre partialité à l'égard de l'Etat hébreu et du refus de celui-ci de se retirer des territoires égyptiens, syriens et palestiniens occupés par la force en 1967. Il semblerait donc que l'approvisionnement régulier en pétrole du Moyen-Orient ne pourrait être assuré que si on cessait de soutenir l'attitude agressive et expansionniste d'Israël et si la justice était réinstaurée dans cette région, car seule la justice pourra y amener paix et stabilité.

-Vous avez probablement raison. Néanmoins il y a plus important: Israël est seul à pouvoir empêcher les Etats islamiques de la région de s'unir et de menacer le monde libre.

-M. le président, je regrette de vous dire que la propagande sioniste vous a fait subir un lavage de cerveau soigné: tout d'abord, la notion d'«espace libre», valable du temps du rideau de fer, est complètement périmée de nos jours car tous les pays sont maintenant libres ou en passe de le devenir. Dans le processus inévitables vers la démocratie, Israël ne fait que retarder la transformation de certains pays totalitaires du Moyen-Orient en pays véritablement libres. Quant à l'Empire musulman que vous semblez tellement redouter, il a bien existé et était très puissant au Moyen-Age. Alors seulement il pouvait représenter une menace aux yeux de certains catholiques superstitieux et ignorants, dont Nostradamus (le soi-disant astrologue). Mais à

-Et le phénomène Khomeiny en Iran, et la poussée du fundamentalisme en Jordanie, en Palestine, en Egypte, en Algérie et ailleurs?

-C'est un fait bien établi. M. le président, que lorsque l'homme est acculé (et quand je dis l'homme, j'embrasse, si j'ose dire, la femme), il ne reste que Dieu vers qui se tourner. Supprimons le sentiment de frustration résultant de la misère, de l'ignorance, de l'injustice et de l'insécurité et nous supprimons le fondamentalisme, non seulement dans les pays islamiques mais aussi en Inde et même en Irlande! Arrêtons donc les méfaits d'Israël au Moyen-Orient et nous y supprimons toute forme d'intolérance.

-Et dire qu'Israël nous coûte trois milliards par an!

-Pardon, M. le président. Il nous coûte près de dix milliards, sans compter le tort et la haine qu'il nous cause.

-Ah, là nous, Aristote, pas dix milliards: trois seulement! Quatre à la rigueur.

-Place aux chiffres. Pour l'année fiscale en cours, nous avons déjà consenti à Israël trois milliards en aide directe, sept cent millions en matériel militaire et quatre cent millions en prêts pour loger les immigrés soviétiques.

-Tout cela ne fait que quatre milliards cent millions.

-Il y a encore environ six milliards que le service d'impôts sur le revenu va perdre cette année à cause d'Israël.

-Six milliards?

-Parfaitement: d'après la loi relative à l'impôt sur le revenu, les dons faits par les personnes ou les entreprises américaines à nos organisations charitables ou à celles des pays amis (dont bien sûr Israël), sont déduits des bénéfices taxables du donneur. Comme l'Agence juive recevra en principe cette année des dons de près de dix milliards des huit millions de juifs américains, ces dons, une fois déduits les bénéfices des donneurs, nous feront perdre six milliards en impôts!

-Si Israël recevait ainsi dix milliards par an, pourquoi a-t-il

-M. le président, l'Agence juive reçoit bien en principe dix milliards, mais Israël n'en perçoit qu'à peine un seul.

-Est-ce une devinette Aristote?

-Non, M. le président. Simplement lorsqu'un Juif américain fait un don, disons de mille dollars, l'Agence juive lui remet un reç

JORDAN TIMES, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1990

## A L'AFFICHE

### Focus

#### Centenaire Fritz Lang

#### Maudit mais moral

Le festival couvrant la période allemande du cinéaste Fritz Lang au Goethe Institut durant le mois de décembre nous propose une série de films dont certains ont fait date.

Les deux premières œuvres -Dr Mabuse der Spieler (1922) et les Nibelungen (1923-1925)- appartiennent à un chapitre extraordinaire du cinéma muet. La période d'après guerre, entre 1919 et 1925, fut caractérisée par des trouvailles en scène allemands portant sur l'évolution du langage cinématographique (éclairage, décors, thématiques). Fritz Lang, une de ses vedettes, s'impose par une esthétique rigoureuse et la moralité exigeante avec laquelle il a traité des obsessions philosophiques allemandes que le destin, la mort et la soif de puissance totale. L'art, dira-t-il, doit être critique: c'est sa force et sa raison d'être.

Doté d'une formation d'architecte et de peintre, Autrichien d'origine, Fritz Lang -né le 5 décembre 1890- débute à Berlin en 1919. Son premier succès de réalisation Der müde Tod (Les trois sœurs, 1921), récit du destin et commentaire sur l'industrialisation de la mort, fut marqué par des décors architectoniques et l'emploi de moyens expressionnistes.

C'est en fait par un film qui définit ce courant et représente l'archétype de la nouvelle esthétique, l'expressionnisme, que le festival Lang débute. A la veille du centenaire, Das Kabinett des Dr Caligari (1919, réalisation: Robert Wiene) servira le 4 décembre comme préface au cinéma allemand de l'entre deux guerres.

## Economy

# Trade officials gather for make-or-break talks

**BRUSSELS** (AP) — Hundreds of officials from around the world gathered Saturday in a last-ditch effort to end disputes over farm subsidies and other issues threatening to scuttle an attempt to reform world trade.

About 2,500 officials were expected to arrive in Brussels over the weekend to get ready for Monday's start of a final week of hard bargaining in the 107-nation Uruguay Round.

The four-year round of talks, named for the country where they began, are the most comprehensive trade negotiations ever.

But even before they sat down to deal, some officials said there is not enough time to complete their ambitious goals.

A British official, demanding anonymity, said: "It is now impractical that the round could be completed in its entirety next week."

The ministers, he said, may make key political decisions and leave it up to aides to fill in the details of an agreement during the remainder of December and in January.

Or, he said the issues could prove so difficult to resolve that the talks would be broken off and resumed at a later date. But he said such an option could be dangerous and "not all that easy to recover."

"If the round ends (this) week, it's going to end in failure," said Jeffery Schott, research fellow at the Institute of International Economics in Washington.

"At best, it can provide some political breakthroughs on the

issues that negotiators have been unable to even talk about," he said.

The Uruguay Round is designed to draw up a new agreement that would overhaul the world trading system by, among other things, writing new rules and reducing tariffs — a sort of tax levied on goods imported by a country — and other barriers to trade in 15 areas.

Those include agriculture, manufactured goods, textiles and such services as banking, transportation and telecommunications. World merchandise trade reached \$3.1 trillion in 1989.

The main stumbling block to an agreement is a sharp dispute between the United States and the European Community (EC) over making deep cuts in government payments to farmers.

The U.S. government, backed by Australia, Argentina and others, wants the EC to strip away much of its expensive network of farm support programmes, making cuts ranging from 75 per cent to 90 per cent.

The 12-nation trading bloc, also known as the common market, has so far refused, offering a 30 per cent trim in limited areas.

France and Germany have been the most resistant to further cuts, although the German government, anxious about the farm vote in Sunday's nationwide elections, may ease its stand once the balloting is out of the way.

The United States and poorer nations heavily dependent on farm exports contend that a new

trade agreement would be worthless without a weighty package on agriculture.

As a result, officials said the farm fight will have to be resolved early in the week if other issues are to be tackled.

The dispute over agriculture "is likely to be brought to a head quite quickly in the first half of the week," said the British official.

The middle of the week has been dubbed in this French-speaking capital as "crise Mercredi" or "crisis Wednesday," meaning a crisis in the talks could erupt Wednesday.

The United States and the European Community are also at odds over new rules — there are none now — covering the \$680-billion annual trade in a banking, tourism, construction, telecommunications and other services.

The EC wants the United States to go along with a non-discriminatory clause so that trade concessions granted to one nation must be given to all partners in the accord. This is called "most favoured nation" treatment.

But in a last-minute demand, the United States has insisted that aviation, shipping and telecommunications be exchanged in negotiations over rules governing intellectual property rights, or protection of ideas, such as copyrights, trademarks and patents.

The United States contends copyright piracy and counterfeiting, much of it in developing nations, have cost American

businesses about \$60 billion in lost sales annually.

The negotiators also will be pushing to get agreements for an overall reduction in tariffs of about one-third, rules to limit restrictions on foreign investment and a phase-out of quotas on textile imports from developing countries.

Western nations will work for tougher measures aimed at keeping Japan and other nations from "dumping" products — selling goods at too-low prices — on their markets.

Japan, for its part, will be trying to maintain its ban on rice imports to protect that country's small farmers.

Developing countries want barriers eased on sales to rich nations of their agricultural products, such as coffee, spices, nuts and fruits.

The negotiators are under pressure to wrap up a deal quickly. U.S. President George Bush's government has to get an accord to the U.S. Congress by March 1 as part of "fast-track" legislation, which prevents legislators from picking apart the arrangement.

The Uruguay Round was preceded by seven previous negotiating rounds, which have reduced tariffs sharply since the end of World War II.

The negotiations are sponsored by the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), which was created in 1947 to promote the expansion of international commerce by reducing barriers to trade.

## British, French tunnellers meet under English Channel

**FOLKESTONE**, England (R) — Engineers digging a railway tunnel under the channel broke through the last dividing rock Saturday and joined Britain to mainland Europe for the first time since the ice age.

Workers from the French and British sides knocked down the last wall of chalk to merge their two tunnels into one, connecting Britain with continental Europe and allowing the first land crossing between the two in 30,000 years.

Champagne flowed and triumphant cheers went up in the crowded tunnel as the breach was made, 30 metres below the sea-bed and 22 kilometres from Britain and 15 kilometres from France.

The two national work teams poured through the narrow gap opened in the rock to greet one another with hugs and hand-shakes and to share a champagne toast.

The tunnel breakthrough was hailed on both sides as a milestone on the road to European unity.

"C'est superbe," said one French tunneller, savoring the sense of history being made after three years' hard digging.

"Great," was the verdict from the British side, delivered by the tunnel project's technical director, Colin Kirkland.

French President Francois Mitterrand said it was a "striking sign of the vitality of the two countries and the efficiency of their cooperation."

British Prime Minister John Major said in a statement: "This is one of the great engineering feats of all time, and a symbol of the opportunities that will exist throughout the new Europe."

The middle passage was cleared by two workers chosen by ballot, one from each tunnelling team. They shook hands and exchanged flags to shout greetings.

In previous reports, the deal was valued at just over \$6 billion.

The deal, the largest Japanese purchase of a U.S. company, was announced Monday but some of the details had not been previously disclosed.

The SEC documents also said that Allen and Company, a New York investment banking firm acting as Matsushita's financial adviser, stands to collect \$8 million in fees once the Japanese company acquires more than 50 per cent of MCA's shares. Even if the deal doesn't go through, Allen and Co. could make \$2 million if someone else steps in and buys more than 50 per cent of MCA at a higher price.

But French television said there was notably less enthusiasm in Britain.

## Matsushita to buy MCA for \$5.8 b

**WASHINGTON** (AP) — Matsushita Electric Industrial Company expects to spend about \$5.8 billion, most of it through short-term borrowing, to acquire U.S. entertainment giant MCA Incorporated.

In a filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Matsushita said it expected to raise \$1 billion of the estimated purchase price through internally generated funds and the remaining \$4.8 billion through the sale of commercial paper, or short-term corporate bonds.

Saturday's breakthrough draws a reluctant Britain closer to Europe as part of the moves toward a single market in 1992.

"One feels one is a European," said Sir John Gruegan, chairman of the county council in Kent, where the British tunnel entrance lies.

An excited French television commentator compared the event to man's first steps on the moon, saying the name of tunneller Philippe Cozette would enter the history books alongside that of American astronaut Neil Armstrong.

But French television said there was notably less enthusiasm in Britain.

## Riyadh writes off Egypt's debts

**RIYADH** (AP) — King Fahd has endorsed writing off \$4.5 billion in loans to Egypt, apparently as a reward for Egypt's support in the Gulf crisis.

The debt waiver had been reported previously, but the king's decision Friday made it official.

A royal court edict late Friday said a Saudi delegation to a planned joint Egyptian-Saudi Arabian committee would "execute" that order.

Egypt is the leading Arab country siding with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait against Iraq in the Gulf, contributing the largest non-Western contingent to the multinational troop buildup in the standoff with President Saddam Hussein over Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of

Kuwait.

Egypt's role has proved to be a windfall for President Hosni Mubarak's government as the United States and the Arab allies are now writing off \$14 billion in debt.

That is almost one-third of its \$50 billion debt that for years has crippled the Egyptian economy.

Forgiveness of a \$6.7 billion Egyptian debt to the United States was part of a foreign aid programme Congress approved and sent to U.S. President George Bush before adjourning its session late October.

Other billions of dollars for which Egypt has been forgiven are from other oil-rich Gulf Arab states, such as the United Arab Emirates and Qatar.

Saudi Arabia and these countries already made their intentions clear about calling off the Egyptian debts on a tour that Mubarak made through the Gulf after Aug. 2.

The joint Egyptian-Saudi Arabian committee meeting in Cairo had been scheduled to start Saturday.

But it was postponed until Wednesday following Bush's surprise offer Friday to send Secretary of State James Baker to Baghdad for talks with Iraqi leaders on the Gulf crisis.

Egyptian officials said the postponement was at Saudi Arabia's request. Saudi sources said Cairo asked for the postponement.

The committee, which oversees political, economic and other cooperation between the two countries, was set up after the early 1988 restoration of

ties between Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

The Cairo meeting will be its third since then, and the sources said it will review the latest developments of the Gulf crisis on the political side.

Officials said it would cover an exchange of ratification documents for a major accord laying the framework for economic cooperation.

The two sides will discuss a "joint free market," the sources said.

They explained that this would practically mean free exchange of goods between the two countries if approved.

Maritime transport would be discussed as well as a planned causeway linking the two countries at the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula, they added.

## U.S., Saudi Arabia to hold talks on oil

**RIYADH** (AP) — U.S. Energy Secretary James Watkins was expected to arrive Saturday for talks on the oil market situation and the kingdom's drive to boost oil output following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

Watkins was to spend a day in Riyadh for talks with Oil Minister Hisham Nazer before travelling to the eastern province, site of most of the kingdom's oil wells and scene of a huge multinational military buildup against Iraq.

Saudi Arabia, sitting on more than 25 per cent of the world's oil reserves, is a key element in helping oil market stability.

Helping to make up for the cutoff in exports from Iraq and Kuwait, Saudi Arabia is now producing more than 8.2 million barrels a day, a 57 per cent increase over its pre-crisis level.

Nazer has said he expects production to reach 8.5 million barrels a day by the end of the year.

Despite the threat of war over Iraq's Aug. 2 occupation of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia is proceeding with an ambitious \$15 billion project to expand capacity to 10 million barrels a day.

An expansion plan drawn up before the crisis called for reaching that level over the next eight to 10 years. But now the kingdom is considering accelerating the timetable, with dates of 1994 or even end-1992 being mentioned.

No official decision has been announced.

"Everybody has been very impressed with how fast Aramco has been able to bring their production up," said an oil industry executive, speaking on condition of anonymity.

While Saudi Aramco is now wholly Saudi owned, the original American owner giant companies are still major partners in the operation.

The source said that Nazer is likely to ask Watkins to "use his resources to do anything he can to help with the accelerated expansion."

That may include speeding up the acquisition of industrial equipment and the hiring of new Saudi Aramco employees.

**Russian republic backs privatisation of land**

**MOSCOW** (R) — The biggest Soviet republic, the Russian Federation, on Friday approved in principle a bill introducing private ownership of land, but the controversial reform could still be emasculated by conservative amendments.

A special Congress of People's Deputies, the highest body of republican authority, voted overwhelmingly for the measure as part of a package of agrarian reforms which many economists regard as the key to improving food supplies.

But the legislation was likely to face stiff conservative opposition before final approval and amendments could strip it of the crucial references to privatisation and buying and selling of land.

The congress affirms the equality of multiple forms of property: State, kolkhoz-cooperative, private, collective-shareholding," the resolution said.

It also called for a reinforce-

ment of "the mechanism of legal regulation of buying and selling of land in order to rule out land speculation and its irrational use."

Virtually all agricultural land in the Russian Federation is controlled by more than 24,000 state-run (sovkhоз) and collective (kolkhoz) farms.

Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev told a meeting of leading intellectuals this week he was opposed to privatisation of land.

"I am resolutely against private property on land," he said.

The Soviet leader also told a Moscow Communist Party plenary session that he favoured privatisation, but for small enterprises mostly in the services sector. "I think it will be small enterprises...where we have a lot of problems."

His comments will disappoint radical reformers and potential investors in the Soviet Union, who want the government to act decisively in breaking the state's stranglehold on the economy.

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